



Bishopstoke Parish Council

To find out how to attend or have a statement read out
Email: clerk@bishopstokepc.org; Call: 07368 487464;
Or visit www.bishopstokepc.org

**Members of the Assets Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on
Tuesday 25th July at 7:30pm at Bishopstoke Methodist Church, Sedgwick Road.
This meeting is open to the public.**

AGENDA

PUBLIC SESSION

1. Apologies for Absence
2. To adopt and sign Minutes of the Assets Committee meeting held on 23 May 2023
3. Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations
4. To make the following decisions regarding allotments
 - Whether to adopt a deposit scheme
 - What rate to set a deposit scheme at if adopted
 - Whether to adopt early intervention when plots become a seed and weed nuisance
 - How early intervention is managed
 - Whether to include a water supplement in future rents
 - What rate to set the water supplement at and how might plot holders mitigate that
5. To set allotment rents for the period 1st October 2023 – 30th September 2024
6. To approve the final design for the Bishopstoke Cemetery gates and sign
7. To receive the Clerk's report, including all areas delegated to the Committee
8. Date, time, place and agenda items for next meeting

D L Wheal
Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council
19th July 2023



Minutes of a Meeting of the Assets Committee held at Bishopstoke Methodist Church commencing at 7:45pm on 23rd May 2023

Present: Cllrs Francis, Harris, Hillier-Wheal, D McKeone and Winstanley

In Attendance: Mr D Wheal (Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council)
Cllr Daly (Bishopstoke Parish Councillor)
Mr T Postle (Green Smile)

Public Attendance: 0 members of the public were present.

ASSETS_2324_M01/

Public Session

1 Election of Chair

1.1 Proposed Cllr D McKeone, Seconded Cllr Francis, **RESOLVED** with 4 in favour and 1 abstention that Cllr Francis be elected Chair of the Assets Committee for the 2023-24 council year.

2 Election of Vice Chair

2.1 Proposed Cllr Winstanley, Seconded Cllr Francis, **RESOLVED** unanimously that Cllr D McKeone be elected Vice Chair of the Assets Committee for the 2023-24 council year.

3 Apologies for Absence

3.1 All Committee members were present.

4 To adopt as a true record, and sign, the Minutes of the Assets Committee meeting held on 28 March 2023

4.1 The Minutes of the above meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting.

4.2 Proposed Cllr Francis, Seconded Cllr D McKeone, **RESOLVED** unanimously that the minutes of the Assets Committee meeting held on 28 March 2023 be adopted as a true record.

4.3 Cllr Hillier-Wheal asked how the bin mapping project was going. The Clerk noted that Cllr C McKeone had done extra areas to help out, for which the Clerk was grateful. Cllr Francis also offered to do extra areas if needed. To date approximately half of the maps have been returned.

5 Declarations of Interest and Requests for Dispensations

5.1 There were none declared or requested.

6 To agree an age-based review of Bishopstoke play areas

6.1 A memo detailing the suggested scope and purpose of the review had been included with the supporting papers for the meeting.

6.2 Cllr Francis noted it would be good to have a published strategy for play areas and that the Council is likely limited to its current locations. Cllr Francis also noted that if more areas are utilised for older children then residents may feel concerned about anti-social behaviour. The LAP / LEAP / NEAP designations may be useful. Finally Cllr Francis suggested consulting Dave Bowen as he has helped the Council previously with regard to play areas and has many years' experience in the field.

Clerk's note – A incorrect definition of LAP / LEAP / NEAP was provided by the Clerk. There is an explanation of the terms attached to these minutes as Appendix A

6.3 Cllr Winstanley suggested the Council plan for more areas appropriate for the younger age groups as young families may appreciate having less distance to travel. Cllr Winstanley also noted that all genders need to be catered for.

6.4 Cllr Daly asked whether there is drainage for the trampolines. The Clerk noted that drainage is only natural, and that other drainage could be installed but this would add to costs. Tom Postle of Green Smile also noted that the trampolines in Parish play areas are all in more waterlogged areas of Bishopstoke.

6.5 Cllr D McKeone suggested signs on play areas indicating what ages they are suitable for. Cllr Hillier-Wheal informed the Committee that, in her experience as a secondary school teacher, girls are often keen on climbing fences, walls etc. Cllr Hillier-Wheal also thought that attempting to cover two of the suggested age ranges in each play area would be difficult and finally that school routes would be an important indicator for where play should be and what they should contain.

6.6 The Clerk explained the process going forward. Over the course of the next few months officers will examine each play area and consult with various play area contractors to determine roughly what ages the play areas are currently suitable for. Simultaneously the Committee will consider where they want the Council to be in 15 years' time and which age ranges should be catered for at each play area. The Clerk noted that the Council had not built up a play area fund and so is likely to have to replace equipment on a piecemeal basis rather than bringing in a whole new play area. Officers will also provide estimates for which play areas are likely to need revamping first. Once these tasks are complete the Committee will attempt to determine budgetary requirements for the next few years to enable the strategy to be implemented.

Action: Clerk – draw up a plan, with timetable, for the implementation of this process.

6.7 The Clerk asked the Committee to consider Glebe Meadow play area specifically, as that is being moved forward by the Glebe Meadow working group. It was agreed that this area should be targeted at toddlers and younger children, with consideration being given to a buggy park.

Action: Clerk – include this information in the next Glebe Meadow Working Group meeting.

7 To discuss play area rules and decide any changes

7.1 A memo outlining the current rules and problems with implementation had been included with the supporting papers for this meeting.

7.2 Cllrs considered having an area in or next to a play area for dogs to be, and setting aside specific areas for ball games, but it was agreed that these would not solve the problem of it being almost impossible to enforce current rules. However, it was agreed that the Council should still keep rules for what is allowed within play areas. The Committee were concerned with ensuring that if any damage or injury occurred as a result of someone breaking the rules, then it should be the rule-breaker that faces consequences, not the Council.

7.3 Proposed Cllr Hillier-Wheal, Seconded Cllr Harris, **RESOLVED** unanimously that a disclaimer be added to each play area to the effect that the Council accepts no liability for anything untoward happening as a result of the rules being broken.

Action: Clerk – draft a suitable disclaimer

7.4 The Clerk noted that the play area signs need to be redone anyway as they have the old office phone number on them. Cllr Francis wanted to ensure the new signs have the Parish logo on them.

Action: Clerk – Arrange for new signs to be designed including current contact details and the disclaimer.

8 To receive the Clerk’s report, including all areas delegated to the Committee

8.1 The Clerk’s report was included with the document pack for this meeting and was noted.

8.2 In addition to the written report the Clerk informed the Committee that sketches for the design of the Cemetery gates had been received and would be circulated. The Clerk also updated the Committee on further progress with the War Memorial’s proposed move to Old St Mary’s Churchyard. The Committee felt that the memorial itself should be closer to the wall and plaques and the Clerk was requested to provide two different options for the Committee members to consider. Cllr Harris noted the presence of cables at the edge of Old St Mary’s and advised caution when attempting to reinstate the path.

Action: Clerk – produce and circulate two plans for the location of the War Memorial

9 Date, time, place and agenda items for next meeting

9.1 The next meeting of the Assets Committee will take place at 7:30pm on Tuesday 25th July 2023 at the Bishopstoke Methodist Church. The Clerk reminded Cllrs that if they wished to add items to the agenda they should ensure the item, with any supporting papers, is with the Clerk by July 18th.

There being no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 8:25pm

Chair's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Clerk's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Assets – 23rd May 2023 -Appendix A

LAP / LEAP / NEAP

Definitions:

LAP – Local Area for Play

A small area of open space specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children to play close to where they live i.e. within one minute's walking time. LAPs are designed to allow for ease of informal observation and supervision and primarily function to encourage informal play and social interaction for toddlers. The LAP requires no play equipment as such, relying more on demonstrative features indicating that play is positively encouraged. Minimum recommended size is 100m² with a buffer zone of at least 5m to the nearest dwellings.

LEAP – Locally Equipped Area for Play

An area of open space specifically designed and laid out with features including equipment for children who are beginning to play independently. The number and nature of equipment and structures is a matter for local decision, though provision for a minimum number of six play experiences is recommended. Typically within a 5 minute walk of a well-used pedestrian route, with a minimum recommended size of 400m² and a 20m buffer zone.

Play features including equipment are an integral part of the LEAP and the attractiveness of such spaces, though it is also important that the space can be used for physical activity and games. LEAPs can also include landscaped areas of play; containing little formal equipment but imaginatively designed and contoured, using as far as is possible natural materials such as logs or boulders which create an attractive setting for play.

NEAP – Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play

This is an area of open space specifically designated, laid out and equipped mainly for older children but potentially with play opportunities for younger children as well. It can provide play equipment and a hard surface area for ball games or wheeled activities such as roller skating or cycling. It may provide other facilities such as a ramp for skateboarding, a rebound wall, and a shelter for meeting and socialising. NEAPs can often be combined with LEAP provision.

This is expected to be within a 15 minute walk of a well-used pedestrian route, providing a minimum of 8 play experiences including 5 individual items with varied difficulties. The minimum space is 1000m² but this can be spread across more than one area (e.g. playground equipment and five-a-side football). There should be a minimum buffer zone of 30m.

Assets – 25th July 2023

Item 04 – Allotment Decisions

Deposit Scheme

The Council is increasingly being hit with increased costs of dealing with both the strimming down / rotavating of plots that are no longer being worked, and also clearing of waste that has been dumped on those same plots. In extreme cases this can cost the Council more than £500 for a plot to be brought back to where it can be let out. The tenancy agreement states that the Council will seek to recover the costs of any work necessary to remedy a plot from the tenant who is leaving, but this has never been done to my knowledge at any point since Bishopstoke first took over managing allotments – I assume due to the costs and time taken to go through small claims courts to retrieve any funds spent on the plot.

One way to alleviate this problem for the Council would be to require a deposit from new tenants which could then be used to offset any costs the Council incurs once the tenancy is ended. Whilst it is not feasible to set a deposit that would cover the more extreme costs, even a small deposit would help.

Other Councils vary from no deposit to deposits in excess of £50, and some even charging a one off fee for setting up the tenancy in the first place. I would recommend setting the deposit at £5 per rod, meaning that for our 5 rod plots it would be £25 and for the 10 rod plots a deposit of £50.

Early Intervention

The main reason for the high costs associated with the clearance of plots that are no longer being worked is the length of time it takes to go from first identifying that a plot is overgrown to the point where a tenant either gives up their tenancy or is terminated by the Council. This process has been dramatically sped up over the year but is still a minimum of 8 weeks, during which time grass and weeds on a plot can grow substantially.

Currently once a plot is identified a tenant is given four weeks in which to correct the problem, and if that doesn't happen then they are given a notice to quit which gives them a further four weeks to clear anything they want to keep from the allotment before it can be let out to another tenant. One option is to combine the two letters so that the tenancy would end at the expiry of the first four weeks. Another is to amend the rules to allow the Council to enter a plot for the purposes of removing any weed and seed nuisance from two weeks after the first letter is sent. The costs of strimming after only two weeks growth (and then keeping on top of it) should be far less than having to clear a plot after 8 weeks growth or more. The deposit (if a scheme is in place) can be used to mitigate the cost and should a tenant wish to carry on with their plot they could be required to compensate the Council for any funds spent maintaining the plot.

Water Supplement

Currently the Council makes no charge for water use at the allotments however we are expecting costs to increase following the Council's decision to allow hosepipe use. This is offset by the poor water pressure at the Underwood Road site in particular.

Again with other Councils the picture is varied. Some have no water charges whatsoever whereas for some it is £10 per year or more.

I would not recommend water charges at Underwood Road until such time as the water pressure problem is sorted, but once that is done it is something the Council should consider. For Jockey Lane it would be sensible to think about water use now.

One possible solution would be to have every tap require a key to be used and then charge an annual fee to be given a key. Another option would be a flat charge to everyone on a particular site with a potential reduction in fee based on the number of water butts present on a plot.

The initial recommendation would be to set a water charge for Jockey Lane at £1 per rod per year with a reduction of 25 pence per rod for each standard sized water butt present and in use on a plot (up to a maximum of 3 water butts). This would go some way to covering Council costs but would also encourage the use of water butts.

For Underwood Road the same system is recommended, but with implementation being deferred until after the water pressure issue is solved.

Recommendations:

That the Committee introduce a refundable deposit of £5 per rod for new tenants which the Council maintains the right to utilise in the event that costs are incurred by the Council on the plot.

That the Council include a 4 week termination with all non-cultivation / seed and weed letters.

That the Council introduce water charging at Jockey Lane at a rate of £1 per rod, with a reduction of 25 pence per rod for each water butt in use on the plot (subject to a maximum of three water butts)

That the Council defer water charges at Underwood Road until such time as the water pressure issue can be solved.

Assets – 25th July 2023

Item 05 – Allotment Rent

| Year | Full | Discount | Income | Expenditure |
|------|------|----------|------------|-------------|
| 2022 | £9 | £6 | £6,033.93 | £10,710.89 |
| 2021 | £8 | £5 | £4,711.15 | £11,889.78 |
| 2020 | £8 | £5 | £5,034.16 | £6,722.56 |
| 2019 | £8 | £5 | £4,905.35 | £8,065.69 |
| 2018 | £8 | £5 | £5,370.81 | £11,257.80 |
| 2017 | £8 | £5 | £5,226.70 | £11,967.16 |
| 2016 | £8 | £5 | £5,150.82 | £9,509.38 |
| 2015 | £7 | £5 | £4,908.98 | £5,132.24 |
| 2014 | £7 | £5 | £4,822.91 | £4,712.28 |
| 2013 | £6 | £4 | £3,290.00 | £4,899.62 |
| 2012 | £6 | £4 | £3,458.50 | £2,923.86 |
| 2011 | £6 | £4 | £3,445.42 | £4,441.28 |
| 2010 | £5 | ?? | £5,175.00* | £3,702.94 |

* Includes £2,241.62 from EBC

As can be seen from the above table, the gap between income gathered from allotment rents and expenditure on the allotments is increasing over time. There are some “one off” payments included such as work on shoring and fences which should not have to be repeated for some time, but there will be other one-off costs that will happen in their place, and even without those there is still a subsidy of at least £2,000 to £3,000 per year being provided to the allotments.

Additionally, the cost of the allotments is expected to increase now that the Council has permitted the use of hosepipes and once the water pressure is brought to an acceptable level at Underwood Road.

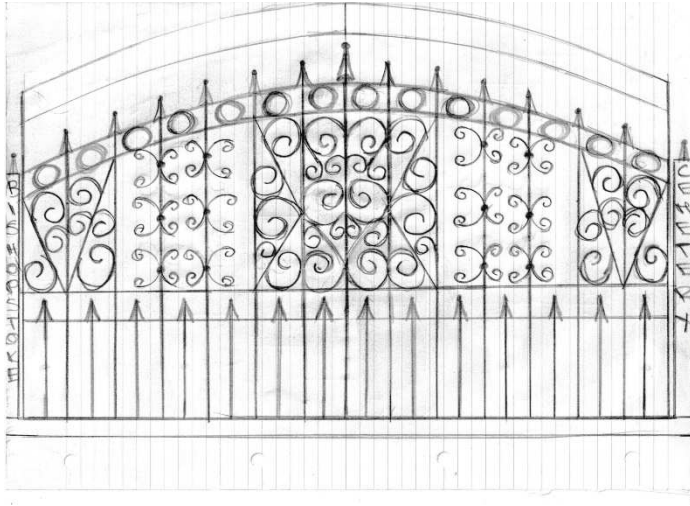
An increase in rent is therefore warranted but I feel it would be appropriate to raise the discounted rate by a smaller amount to maintain the rough guide of around two thirds of standard rate which is where it has been for most of the time the Parish Council has been running the allotments. An increase of £1 per rod in standard rents and 50p per rod for discounted rent would bring in an estimated additional £650 to help cover allotment costs.

Recommendations:

That the Committee increase allotment fees to £10 per rod for standard rent, and to £6.50 per rod for discounted rent.

Assets – 25th July 2023

Item 06 – Cemetery Gates



BISHOPSTOKE
CEMETERY

Width of gate 5.2 metres
Height at posts 1.75 metres rising to 2 metres at the centre.

2 x Posts 200mm x 200mm, 6mm thick
Flat bar frame and horizontal flats 40 x 12mm
Vertical frame edges 40 x 20mm solid flats
Vertical infill square bar rods 16mm

Lettering spelling out BISHOPSTOKE on one post and CEMETERY on the other.

All galvanised and dipped prior to a powder coating satin black finish.

Additionally, a raised, arched sign for “Bishopstoke Cemetery” in similar construction and finish.

Total cost for gates including installation and removal of old gates £9,100.
Potential reduction of £360 if no finials are included.

Cost for additional arch sign installed to the side £520.

Recommendations:

That the Committee approve going ahead with both the Cemetery Gates and arched sign

Assets Committee - Clerk's report 25th July 2023

Actions from previous meetings

ASSETS_2223_M05/45.3 Regarding the website and Glebe Meadow information
This has not yet been actioned.

ASSETS_2223_M06/53.4 Regarding a crossing from Glebe Meadow to Old St Mary's
This request was submitted via the Hantsweb portal on the 31st March. A reply has not yet been received.

ASSETS_2223_M06/55.3 Regarding bins
Streetscene have been asked for details of all the bins they empty within Bishopstoke.

ASSETS_2324_M01/6.6 Regarding a play area review
The timetable has not yet been drawn up.

ASSETS_2324_M01/6.7 Regarding Glebe Meadow play area
All information was passed to the Glebe Meadow Working Group

ASSETS_2324_M01/7.3 Regarding the play area disclaimer and signs
The disclaimer has been drafted. Now exploring less expensive ways to add it to the signage without having to replace all play area signs again.

ASSETS_2324_M01/8.2 Regarding the War Memorial
Plans were circulated and have been sent to both the Diocese and the Parochial Church Council for comments and approval. A planning application has been submitted.

Recommendations from previous meetings

There were no recommendations for Full Council to decide on.

Assets report 25th July 2023

Play Areas

Nothing new to report

Burial Grounds

An initial meeting with one potential contractor for the boardwalk took place on Thursday 20th July. There remains no news regarding the transfer of Stoke Common Cemetery.

Allotments

The RFO has been attempting to arrange meetings with contractors to suggest the best ways, and associated costs, for improving the water supply at Underwood Road.

Fixed Assets

One of the benches behind the car park on Blackberry Drive is regularly being pulled from the ground and moved elsewhere. Fair Oak Parish Council, who installed the bench originally, have been asked to examine the bench to determine what can be done to fix it properly in place.

Open Space & Trees

The tree survey will be taking place in August. Work will be contracted out for tree maintenance shortly after.

Parish owned and managed buildings

Shears Mill has undergone its usual annual maintenance..